

REMARKS

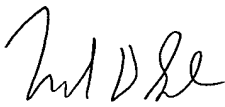
In the Office Action, the Examiner restricted the application to one of two inventions: Group I – Claims 1-12, drawn to a surgical stapler having an indicator positioned on the handle assembly for providing visual indication to a surgeon that the head portion of the stapler is in the approximated position; and Group II – Claims 13-20, drawn to an anvil sub-assembly having a plurality of staple forming pockets, a cutting ring, and a retainer clip.

Applicants hereby elect with traverse Group I, claims 1-12. Claims 13-20 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 21-28 have been added directed to Group I. No new matter has been added.

Prompt and favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned should the Examiner believe it would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 2/8/07

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